

Islamic Sciences

Objectives of this Course

Background

- Loss of rooted and informed paradigm and Response:
 - Collapse of the Ottoman empire
 - Loss of political and education capital
 - Challenge of modernity against traditional Islam
 - Western education, lifestyle, and technology
- Challenge to traditional Islam:
 - Scientific Method challenging the unseen and reductionism
 - Western Historical critical method (HCM) challenging tradition
 - Theory of criticism challenging ethical boundaries
- Response of the Ummah: “Does Islam really say that?”
 - Fundamentalists – looking back because Allah is mad with us
 - Modernists/Reformers – change Islam to fit into modern times
 - Mahdists – messianic response
 - Usulis/Foundationlist – rooted in Principles

Objectives

- Ground the Ummah in the Usul (rooted in Principles)
- Applying principles in modern times
- Empower to defense against common doubts
 - Aethism
 - Historicization and reinterpretation
 - Preservation of the Text
 - Discrediting centuries of scholarship
- Tools to combat extremist responses
- Discourage and caution against derivation of personal Islamic understanding from uninformed foundations

Importance of Knowledge

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۚ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?"

It is **only those of understanding who will remember.**

Zumar 39:9

Introduction

The **roots** of Islam are two primary sacred sources: the Holy Quran which is the divinely revealed scripture, and the Prophetic Tradition (Sunnah). These two sources give us principles and foundations to embody and live the religion.

From these sources and the principles, we derive its three primary **fruits**:

- Creed or Orthodoxy, and
- Practices or Othopraxy comprising of
 - Legal Practice, and
 - Spiritual Practice.

The **Creed** teaches us about “who and why” we worship the one and only God, Allah subḥānahu wa ta‘āla, and...

The **Practices** inform us about the “what we must be doing and how must we live the Creed” in order to seek His pleasure and become eligible for His Mercy and Reward.

حديث جبريل / أمّ السنّة Ḥadīth Jibrīl

‘Umar ^{RA} narrated:

While we were one day sitting with the Rasūlullāh ^{صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم}, there appeared before us a man dressed in extremely white clothes and with very black hair. No traces of journeying were visible on him, and none of us knew him. He sat down close by the Prophet ^{صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم}, rested his palms over his thighs...

and said, “O Muhammad! Tell me about **Islām**.” Rasūlullāh ^{صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم} said, “Islām is that:

1. you should testify that
there is no deity except Allah and
that Muhammad is His Messenger,
2. that you should establish Ṣalāh,
3. pay the Zakāh,
4. fast during Ramaḍān, and

5. perform Ḥajj to the House, if you are able to do so.”

The man said, “You have spoken truly.” We were astonished at his questioning him. He went on to say, “Tell me about **īmān**.” ﷺ answered, “It is that:

1. you believe in Allah,
2. His angels,
3. His books,
4. His messengers,
5. in the Last Day, and
6. in Predestination: both in its good and in its evil aspects.”

He said, “You have spoken truly.” Then he said, “Tell me about **iḥsān**.” ﷺ answered, “It is that

1. you worship Allāh as though you could see Him,
2. for though you cannot see Him yet know that He sees you.”

(Ḥadīth then continues about the signs of the day of judgment..) Thereupon the man went off. ﷺ said: “I waited a while, and then ﷺ said, “O ‘Umar, do you know who that questioner was?” ﷺ replied, “Allāh and His Messenger know best.”

He ﷺ said, “**That was Jibrīl. He came to teach you your religion.**”

Models and Frameworks

—
‘All models are wrong, but some are useful.’

George Box

‘A model is a simplification or approximation of reality and hence will not reflect all of reality. ... Box noted that "all models are wrong, but some are useful." While a model can never be "truth," a model might be ranked from very useful, to useful, to somewhat useful to, finally, essentially useless.’

K. P. Burnham

Priorities الأولويات

- Īmān / Faith: inner convictions
- Islām / Submission: affirmation of inner convictions
- Iḥsān / Excellence: behavioral manifestations

(Each has a school of thought)

Beginning With the End in Mind

أَكْثَرُ مَا يُدْخِلُ الْجَنَّةَ: تَقْوَى اللَّهِ، وَحُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ

That which may enter you in Jannah the most is:

(1) fear of Allāh, and (2) good conduct.

Tirmidhi, Aḥmad

Key Pillars of Faith الإيمان

- Īmān in Allah: Ultimate knowledge
- Īmān in Hereafter: Leading to the ultimate goal

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result.

Nisā' 4:59

Key Pillars of Excellence الإحسان

Good Conduct حسن العبادة وحسن الخلق

Types of good conduct:

- Conduct with Creator: “you worship Allah as though you could see Him.”
 - Allah and His Book/Message
 - The Messenger and his Sunnah
- General Conduct: “you cannot see Him yet  know that  He sees you.”
 - One’s self: Body, mind, soul, emotions
 - Parents, Spouse, Children
 - Kith and kin, Neighbors, Community, Humanity, Animals, Environment

Stations of Conduct in the Quran

- So that you/they...
 - Understanding, Guidance, Pondering, Reasoning
 - Taqwā, Mindfulness, Belief, Submission, Cautiousness, Success, Mercy, Pleasure, Repentance, Humility, Abstinence, Gratefulness
- Allah loves...
 - Who excel, Repenters, Purifiers, Cleansers, Mindful, Patient, Reliant  upon Him , Just, Fighters in His path

- Allah does not love...
 - Transgressors, Corruption, Corruptors, Traitors, Wrongdoers, Disbelievers/Rejectors, Exultant, Deceiving sinner, Sinning disbeliever, Deceiving ingrate, Self-deluded boastful
- Allah is with...
 - Patient, Muttaqī, Believer, Who excel

TAKEAWAY on Ultimate Objective

- Earning pleasure of Allah must be above all else
- Excel in all relationships
- Use priorities to stay aligned with the ultimate objective

Knowledge & Sources العلم والمصادر

Definition: Knowing how something that is known actually is.

Types of Knowledge العلم

- Immediate علم الضروري 'ilm al-darūrī
- Acquired علم المكتسب 'ilm al-muktasib
 - Rational علم المعقول 'ilm al-ma'qūl
 - Transmitted علم المنقول 'ilm al-manqūl

Levels of Acquired Knowledge مراتب العلم

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| • Ignorance | jahl الجهل | 0% |
| • Illusion | wahm الوهم | less than 50% |
| • Doubt | shakk الشك | 50% |
| • Assumption | zann الظن | less than 100% |
| • Certainty | yaqīn اليقين | 100% |

Levels of Certainty of Knowledge مراتب اليقين

- Theoretical علم اليقين 'ilm al-yaqīn
- Visual عين اليقين 'ayn al-yaqīn
- Experiential/Absolute حق اليقين haqq al-yaqīn

المصادر / أصل Classification of Sources of Knowledge

- Origin
- Application
- Authority

المصدرية Origin-based Sacred Knowledge

- Textual النصّ naṣṣ
 - Quran, Sunnah
- Non-textual الراي/الإجتهد ra'ī / ijtihād
 - Consensus, Analogy, Custom, Preference, Harm avoidance

الاتفاقية Application-based Sacred Knowledge

- Agreed upon متفق اليه muttafaq ilayh
 - Quran, Sunnah, Consensus, Analogy
- Debatable مختلف فيه mukhtalaf fih
 - Custom, Preference, Harm avoidance

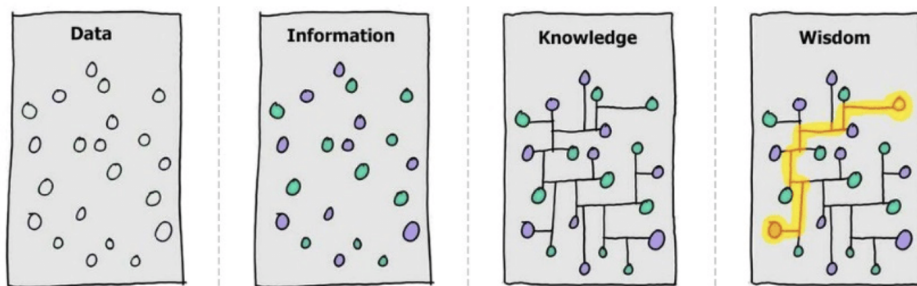
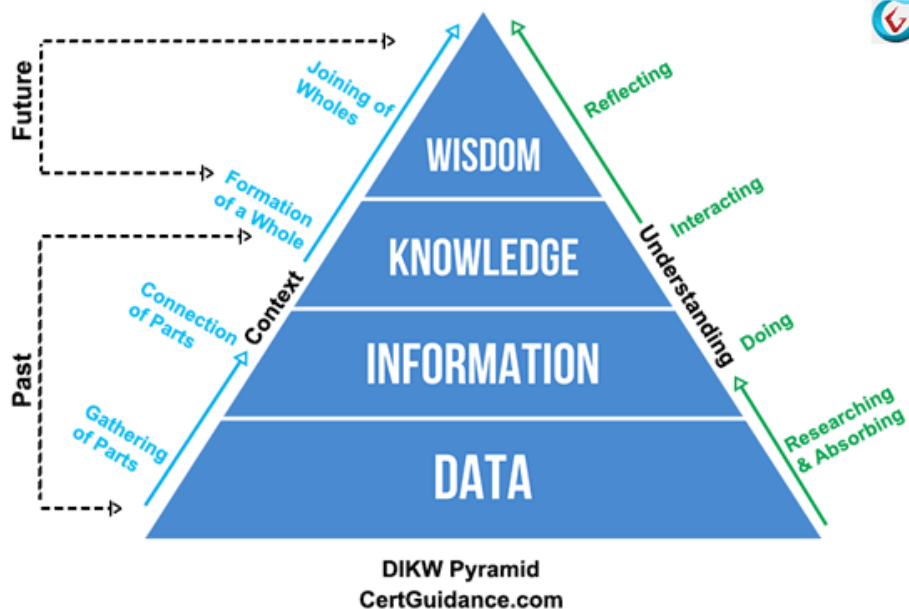
النبوتية Authority-based Sacred Knowledge

- Definitive قطعي qat'ī
- Probable ظني zannī
- Meaning-based الدلالة dalālah
- Authenticity-based الثبوت thubūt

Source & Evidence Matrix

Meaning / Authenticity	Definitive	Probable
Definitive	Definitive in meaning Definitive in authenticity	Probable in meaning Definitive in authenticity
Probable	Definitive in meaning Probable in authenticity	Probable in meaning Probable in authenticity

Degrees of Wisdom



TAKEAWAY on Knowledge

- Discern source of knowledge: reliable to assumed to unreliable
- Discern strength of evidence: authentic to weak to opinion to false
- Discern strength of meaning: clear to ambiguous to assumptions
- Discern differences in approach: methodologically consistent to mere opinion
- Discern strength of advice/ruling: based on methodology or not
- "We raise to degrees whom We will, but over all those endowed with knowledge is another [of higher] knowledge.." Yūsuf 12:76
- Only Allah knows best.